CRIME

NO. 13

CRIME SUSPENSTORIES

10¢

LIZZIE BORDEN TOOK AN AXE...AND GAVE HER FATHER FORTY WHACKS! WHEN SHE SAW WHAT SHE HAD DONE...SHE GAVE HER MOTHER FORTY-ONE!

HEAR NO EVIL!

THE DETECTIVE SHOOK HIS HEAD! THE WOMAN SEATED BEFORE HIM BEGAN TO SOB AGAIN! HE PATTED HER SHOULDER REASSURINGLY...
NOW, NOW, MRS. REARDON! TRY TO CONTROL YOURSELF! GO ON WITH YOUR STORY!
YES... SOB! I...I'LL TRY! AS I SAID... I FIRST MET MR. REARDON... FRED... SOB... TWO YEARS AGO...

IT WAS AT A COCKTAIL PARTY! HE CARRIED A LITTLE PAD AND PENCIL AROUND WITH HIM! HE SEEMED *WELL-DRESSED*... QUITE *SUCCESSFUL*...

'I WATCHED HIM MOVING AMONG THE OTHER GUESTS! EVERY ONCE IN A WHILE HE'D SPEAK TO SOMEONE AND HAND THEM THE PAD! THEN THEY'D SCRIBBLE SOMETHING! FINALLY MY CURIOSITY GOT THE BETTER OF ME...'

IRMA! *WHO'S* THAT? THE ONE WITH THE *PENCIL* AND *PAPER!*

OH, HE'S *FRED REARDON*, RITA! HE'S *VERY WEALTHY!* POOR GUY! HE'S *STONE DEAF!*

'I ASKED IRMA TO INTRODUCE ME TO FRED! SHE AGREED! I SMILED AT HIM AS IRMA WROTE...'

FRED! I WANT YOU TO MEET A VERY DEAR FRIEND OF MINE! THIS IS *RITA WALDON!*

I'M VERY GLAD TO *MEET* YOU, MISS WALDON!

'I SHOOK MY HEAD AS FRED ACKNOWLEDGED THE INTRODUCTION! I TOOK HIS LITTLE PAD AND SCRIBBLED...'

NOT *MISS WALDON*, FRED! *RITA!* WE'RE GOING TO BE *FRIENDS!*

OH! FINE! AND *YOU* CAN CALL ME *FRED*, RITA!

'FRANKLY, I WAS INTRIGUED BY FRED'S WEALTH! THAT NIGHT, WHILE I DANCED WITH HIM, I MADE UP MY MIND! AS WE GLIDED AROUND THE FLOOR, I WHISPERED INTO HIS DEAF EARS...'

I'M GOING TO *MARRY* YOU, FRED REARDON! FROM HERE ON IN, *YOU'RE MY MEAL-TICKET!*

ONE OF THESE DAYS YOU MUST COME OUT ON MY *YACHT*, RITA! DO YOU *LIKE* SAILING?

'I NODDED IN ANSWER TO HIS QUESTION! UNDER MY BREATH, I MUTTERED...'

YOU *BET* I LIKE SAILING, BUSTER! AND FROM NOW ON, *THAT'S* WHAT IT'S GOING TO *BE* FOR LITTLE RITA! *SMOOTH* SAILING!

YOU *DO?* I'M *GLAD!* HOW ABOUT *THIS SUNDAY?* I'LL PICK YOU UP!

'FRED DROVE ME HOME THAT NIGHT! WHEN WE REACHED MY APARTMENT I TRIED TO LOOK ALLURING...'

C'MON, YOU DUMB SLOB! *KISS ME GOOD-NIGHT!* I'VE GOT TO *START* MAKING *TIME!*

WELL, RITA! GOOD-NIGHT! SEE YOU *SUNDAY*... ABOUT *TEN!* OH! AND BRING A *SUIT*... A *BATHING SUIT!*

'THAT SUNDAY, I SAW FRED'S YACHT FOR THE FIRST TIME! I ALMOST FAINTED! IT WAS *HUGE!* A *PALACE!* I WAS EVEN *MORE* DETERMINED TO HOOK HIM AFTER THAT! I SCRIBBLED LIKE CRAZY THAT DAY...'

MMMM! *THIS* IS THE *LIFE!* THE BOAT IS *HEAVENLY,* FRED!

I'M GLAD YOU *LIKE* IT, RITA!

'IN FACT, I SCRIBBLED FOR *TWO WHOLE MONTHS* BEFORE I *LANDED* THE LOADED CRUMB! FINALLY, ONE DAY, AS WE WERE RIDING TOGETHER, HE REINED UP HIS HORSE BESIDE ME...'

RITA! I... I DON'T KNOW HOW TO *SAY* THIS...

JUST *SAY* IT, KIDDO! I'VE BEEN KNOCKING MY *BRAINS* OUT FOR THIS...

'I LOOKED AT HIM COYLY AS HE STUTTERED AND STAMMERED! FINALLY HE CHOKED IT OUT...'

I... I *LOVE* YOU, RITA! I WANT TO *MARRY* YOU!

WHEW! AT *LAST!*

'I STARTED TO REACH FOR HIS LITTLE PAD...'

NO, DARLING! *WAIT!* *DON'T* WRITE YOUR ANSWER.. *NOT YET!* *THINK* ABOUT IT! I... I...

GIMME THE *PAD,* BUSTER! I'VE *BEEN* THINKING ABOUT IT!

'I WROTE IT... I WROTE IT *REAL SWEET...*'

OH, DEAREST! OF *COURSE* I'LL MARRY YOU! I'VE LOVED YOU EVER SINCE THAT *FIRST DAY...*

RITA! SWEET...

'I HAD TO KEEP MYSELF FROM LAUGHING! WHEN HE PUT HIS ARMS AROUND ME AND KISSED ME, WE ALMOST FELL OFF THE HORSES...'

OKAY, LOVER BOY! TAKE IT *EASY...*

MY *DEAR ONE...*

'THE NEXT NIGHT FRED GAVE ME THE RING! IT WAS THE BIGGEST ROCK I EVER SAW! I COULD HARDLY LIFT MY HAND TO WRITE...'

IT'S *BEAUTIFUL,* DARLING! *BREATHTAKING!*

IT *SUITS YOU,* MY SWEET!

'THE WEDDING WAS A *RIOT!* THE STIFF COULDN'T HEAR A *WORD!* I HAD TO *NUDGE* HIM WHEN TO SAY "I DO"...'

HUH? OH! *I DO!*

...THEN I NOW PRONOUNCE YOU *MAN AND WIFE!*

'I *HAD* HIM...HIM AND HIS *BIG FAT BANKROLL*...AT *LAST!* WHAT A *HONEYMOON* WE HAD! *HE TALKED*...AND *I WROTE!* IT WAS *REAL ROMANTIC*...'

YES, DEAR! THE FALLS *ARE* LOVELY!

WHERE WOULD YOU LIKE TO GO FROM *HERE*, HONEY? JUST *NAME* IT!

'THE HONEYMOON LASTED *SIX MONTHS!* I LEARNED ALL ABOUT MY NEW HUSBAND...HOW HE'D GOTTEN DEAF DURING THE WAR...EVERYTHING...'

IT WAS ON *NEW GEORGIA!* A *SHELL* EXPLODED NEAR ME! I GOT FOUR PIECES OF SHRAPNEL IN MY *LEG*, AND I COULDN'T *HEAR* AFTER THAT!

ISN'T THAT *TOO BAD!*

THEY TRIED TO TEACH ME *LIP-READING* BUT I JUST COULDN'T *MASTER* IT! I FOUND THE *PAD AND PENCIL* WAS *MUCH EASIER*...

LUCKY FOR ME! I NEVER *THOUGHT* OF *LIP-READING!*

'AND THEN THE HONEYMOON WAS OVER! WE CAME HOME TO THAT BIG MANSION OF HIS AND SETTLED DOWN! HE STARTED GOING DOWNTOWN AGAIN...*MAKING MONEY!* AND I STARTED *SPENDING* IT...'

IT LOOKS VERY *LOVELY* ON YOU, RITA!

IT *OUGHT* TO! IT *COST* YOU ENOUGH!

'YES! YOU GUESSED IT! IT WASN'T LONG BEFORE I GOT BORED WITH THE WHOLE DEAL! SOMEHOW, THE MONEY WASN'T ENOUGH! I WAS SICK AND TIRED OF FRED! BUT I KEPT SMILING, WHILE I TOLD THOSE DEAF EARS OFF...'

I *HATE* YOU, YOU DUMB SLOB! IF IT WASN'T FOR YOUR *DOUGH*, I'D *WALK OUT ON YOU*... *TONIGHT!*

DID YOU WANT TO *WRITE* SOMETHING, HONEY?

'AND THEN, ONE NIGHT, FRED BROUGHT *VANCE* HOME TO DINNER! *VANCE TOBIN* WAS ONE OF FRED'S BUSINESS ASSOCIATES! THEY WERE *OLD FRIENDS!* VANCE WAS *YOUNG*...*HANDSOME*...*MY TYPE*...'

A *PLEASURE*, RITA! I DIDN'T KNOW FRED'S NEW WIFE WAS SO *LOVELY!*

WHY, *THANK* YOU, VANCE!

HEY, YOU TWO! *WRITE* SOMETHING! LET *ME* IN ON THE *CHIT-CHAT!*

'VANCE HAD BEEN AWAY IN EUROPE FOR THE PREVIOUS TWO YEARS! THAT'S WHY WE HADN'T MET BEFORE! I THINK WE FELL IN LOVE THAT VERY FIRST EVENING, ALTHOUGH WE KEPT THE CONVERSATION PRETTY GENERAL...'

TOO BAD ABOUT FRED'S ER... *WAR ACCIDENT*, RITA! I GUESS IT'S PRETTY *ROUGH* ON YOU...BEING MARRIED TO A *DEAF MAN!*

IT CAN BE VERY...SHALL WE SAY...*DULL* AT TIMES, VANCE! TALKING WITH A PENCIL ISN'T VERY MUCH *FUN!*

'I KEPT SCRIBBLING NOTES TO FRED, AND HE CHATTERED ON ABOUT NOTHING WHILE VANCE AND I PARRIED INNUENDOES...'

OH! YES! PARIS *IS* LOVELY! BUT I LIKE *ROME* MYSELF!

PERHAPS WE CAN *GET TOGETHER* SOME AFTERNOON, RITA! I... ER... I'M A *GOOD LISTENER!*

IT MIGHT BE *NICE*, VANCE! I COULD TELL YOU SOME *INTERESTING THINGS!*

'SO VANCE AND I STARTED TO SEE EACH OTHER SECRETLY...EVERY CHANCE WE COULD GET! IT WASN'T LONG BEFORE I CONFESSED...'

I MARRIED HIM FOR HIS *MONEY*, VANCE! I *NEVER* LOVED HIM! I CAN'T *STAND* HIM!

DIVORCE HIM, THEN! MARRY *ME!* I'M *BROKE*... BUT...

NO, VANCE! IT WOULDN'T BE ANY *GOOD!* I *COULDN'T* GIVE UP THE THINGS I'VE GOTTEN *USED* TO!

BUT... DON'T YOU WANT *LOVE*, RITA!

OF *COURSE* I DO, DARLING! OF COURSE...

BABY! C'MERE...

'AND THEN, FRED HAD THE ACCIDENT! HE CAME HOME EARLY ONE DAY...UNEXPECTED! VANCE AND I WERE ALONE...'

I *LOVE* YOU, BABY!

I LOVE *YOU*, VANCE!

RITA! RITA...YOU *HOME?*

'LUCKILY, VANCE AND I BROKE APART BEFORE FRED CAME INTO THE ROOM! I DON'T THINK HE NOTICED VANCE BLUSHING...'

I...I JUST HAD AN ACCIDENT, RITA! SMASH UP! THE CAR... ER...OH! *HELLO*, VANCE! WHY THE DAYTIME VISIT?

WRITE SOMETHING, VANCE! *ANYTHING!* THINK UP AN *EXCUSE FOR BEING HERE!*

FOR CRYING OUT LOUD, BABY! *WHAT?*

WRITE THAT YOU CAME OVER TO SELL ME SOME INSURANCE! THAT'S WHAT YOU'RE DOING NOW ISN'T IT?
YES! OKAY! OKAY! SAY, I HOPE THERE ISN'T ANY LIPSTICK ON MY FACE!
HERE'S THE PAD, VANCE!

VANCE WROTE! FRED BELIEVED IT...
I'M TRYING TO SELL YOUR WIFE A POLICY ON THAT NEW MINK COAT, FRED! BUT WHAT'S THIS ABOUT AN ACCIDENT?
OH! YES! I PILED UP THE CONVERTIBLE! ALMOST GOT MYSELF KILLED!
VANCE! LISTEN TO HIM!

FRED RAMBLED ON WHILE VANCE AND I SPOKE ABOVE HIS NARRATION...
I'M LISTENING! SO WHAT!
THE CAR'S A TOTAL WRECK! I WAS LUCKY!
SO THERE'S OUR ANSWER! IF HE WERE DEAD, WE'D BE SET!

DEAD?! BUT...
BOY! WHAT A SMACK-UP!
DON'T YOU SEE? I'D HAVE HIS DOUGH... AND WE COULD BE MARRIED!

WE'D HAVE OUR CAKE AND EAT IT TOO, EH, BABY?
I ALMOST COMMITTED SUICIDE!
SUICIDE! THAT'S WHAT IT COULD LOOK LIKE!

CAN YOU FORGE HIS HANDWRITING... FOR A SUICIDE NOTE?
PERFECTLY! THERE'S SOME POISON OUT IN THE GARDENER'S SHED! I'LL GET IT!
WHEW! I COULD USE A CUP OF COFFEE!

I TOOK FRED'S PAD AND WROTE...
SIT DOWN, DEAR! I'LL MAKE YOU SOME! VANCE AND I WILL JOIN YOU! YOU'VE HAD A HORRIBLE EXPERIENCE!
THANKS, RITA! HEY VANCE! MAYBE I OUGHT TO BUY SOME INSURANCE?!
MAYBE YOU'D BETTER FRED! YOU'LL NEED IT!

'I WENT OUT TO THE KITCHEN! IT WAS THE SERVANT'S DAY OFF! EVERYTHING WAS PAT! WHILE THE WATER FOR THE COFFEE CAME TO A BOIL, I GOT THE POISON FROM THE GARDENER'S SHED...'

POTASSIUM CYANIDE! PERFECT!

'I PUT THE CYANIDE INTO FRED'S COFFEE AND BROUGHT OUT THE TRAY...'

AS SOON AS HE *DRINKS* IT, I'LL WRITE THE *NOTE!* HE'LL HAVE BEEN DESPONDENT OVER HIS *DEAFNESS*... AND TOOK THE *EASY WAY OUT!*

THEN WE'LL *BEAT IT!* WE'LL SAY WE WERE OUT *DRIVING ALL DAY!*

MMMM! SMELLS GOOD!

IT'S THE CUP ON THE RIGHT! BE *CAREFUL!*

I WILL!

YOU FORGOT THE *CREAM*, RITA!

'I WENT OUT TO GET THE CREAM! VANCE CAME OUT AFTER ME...'

MAYBE WE'D BETTER NOT HAVE BEEN DRIVING *TOGETHER*, RITA! IT MIGHT BE *SUSPICIOUS! WHY TAKE CHANCES?*

PERHAPS YOU'RE *RIGHT!* OKAY! I'LL HAVE BEEN *SHOPPING* IN TOWN!

'I GAVE FRED THE POISONED COFFEE! HE POURED THE CREAM AND HESITATED...'

AREN'T YOU TWO *HAVING* ANY?

HERE, VANCE! *DRINK* IT! MAKE IT *LOOK GOOD!*

CHECK!

'FRED DRAINED HIS CUP! VANCE DRANK HIS! I WATCHED FRED'S FACE...'

WHY ARE YOU *STARING* AT ME, RITA?

DIE, ALREADY! THERE WAS ENOUGH *POISON* IN THAT CUP TO KILL A...A...

'SUDDENLY VANCE SCREAMED! HE CLUTCHED AT HIS THROAT AND PITCHED FORWARD...'

VANCE!

WHAT THE...

YAAAAAGHH!

RITA REARDON STARED DOWN AT THE BODY OF VANCE TOBIN STRETCHED OUT ON THE FLOOR BEFORE HER...

I...I GAVE THAT POISONED COFFEE TO VANCE... BY MISTAKE! SOB...SOB...

I SEE! AND YOU'LL SIGN A CONFESSION, MRS. REARDON?

RITA LOOKED UP AT THE DETECTIVE WITH TEAR-FILLED EYES...

SOB...YES! I'LL SIGN IT! I DON'T WANT TO LIVE ANY MORE! I...I LOVED HIM! I NEVER LOVED THAT DEAF IDIOT!

OKAY, MRS. REARDON! LET'S GO!

FRED REARDON GOT UP AS THE DETECTIVE LED HIS WIFE TO THE DOOR...

OKAY, BOYS! GET THAT STIFF OUT OF HERE!

WHERE... WHERE ARE YOU TAKING HER?

THE DETECTIVE SCRIBBLED HIS ANSWER TO FRED'S QUESTION...

SHE'S BEING BOOKED, MR. REARDON! SHE'S CONFESSED TO MURDER!

OH! I... I SEE!

THE DETECTIVE WROTE ANOTHER MESSAGE...

YOU'LL TESTIFY AT THE TRIAL, OF COURSE?

OF COURSE!

THEY WENT OUT...ALL OF THEM! THE DETECTIVE TOOK RITA...AND THE MORGUE-WAGON ATTENDENTS TOOK VANCE! FRED CLOSED THE DOOR BEHIND THEM...WAITED A FEW MINUTES TILL THEIR CAR-ENGINES FADED AWAY! THEN HE WENT TO THE RADIO AND TURNED IT ON...

CLICK!

THE MUSIC CAME UP SOFT AND SWEET! FRED SMILED! HE HADN'T HEARD MUSIC SINCE THAT DAY IN NEW GEORGIA! BUT THAT WAS ALL OVER NOW! THE ACCIDENT HAD RETURNED HIS HEARING TO HIM! HE CHUCKLED AS HE HUMMED ALONG! YES! HE'D HEARD A LOT THAT AFTERNOON! AND SWITCHING THE COFFEE CUPS HAD BEEN SO SIMPLE!

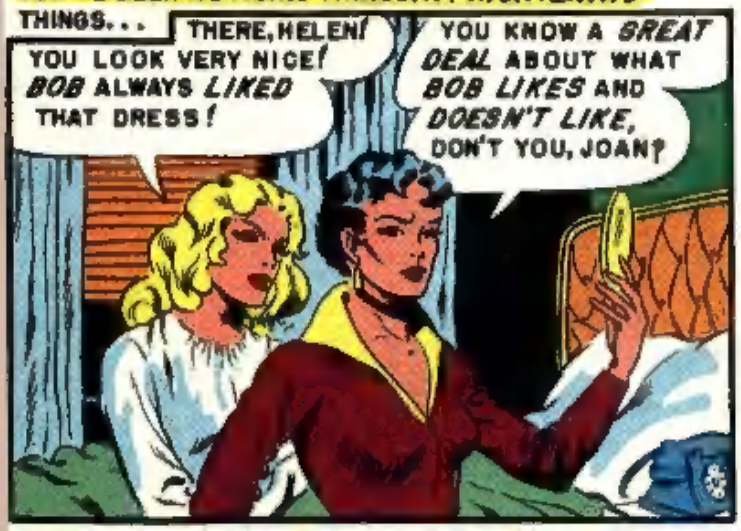
THE END

HERE ARE TWO 'E. C. QUICKIES'! IN *THIS* ONE, YOU ACT ON...

FIRST IMPULSE!

SID CHECK

IN THIS FIRST '*E.C. QUICKIE*,' YOUR NAME IS *HELEN FORBES!* AT THIS VERY MOMENT, YOUR YOUNGER SISTER, *JOAN*, IS HELPING YOU DRESS! LATELY, THERE'S BEEN A TENSION BUILDING UP BETWEEN YOU AND JOAN! YOU'VE BEEN NOTICING THINGS... *FRIGHTENING* THINGS...



YOU'RE *JEALOUS*, HELEN FORBES! JEALOUS OF YOUR *OWN SISTER!* AFTER ALL, YOU'RE ALMOST *THIRTY!* JOAN IS *TWENTY-THREE!* BOB IS THE *FIRST* MAN YOU'VE REALLY *WANTED!* BUT... BUT HE JUST HASN'T GOTTEN AROUND TO *PROPOSING!* AND LATELY... *LATELY*...

YOU'RE *CRAZY*, HELEN! *I* DON'T WANT *BOB*...

I'VE SEEN YOU *WHISPERING* TOGETHER WHEN YOU THINK IT'S SAFE! I'VE SEEN THOSE *SLY GLANCES* YOU'VE BEEN SENDING HIS WAY!

LOOK, HELEN! BOB WILL PROBABLY *MARRY* YOU SOME DAY! WHY SHOULD *I*...?

HE HASN'T *ASKED* ME YET, *HAS HE?* HE TOLD ME HE WAS *MAD* ABOUT ME WHEN WE *FIRST* STARTED GOING TOGETHER! THEN... WHEN I BROUGHT HIM *HOME*... AND HE MET *YOU*... HE STARTED TO *CHANGE!* I'M *LOSING* HIM! YOU'RE TAKING HIM *AWAY!*

YOU'RE A *STUPID JEALOUS FOOL!*

DO YOU *DENY IT?* DO *YOU DENY THAT YOU LOVE HIM?*

THE DOORBELL INTERRUPTS YOUR RAVING! JOAN SEEMS TO BREATHE A SIGH OF RELIEF...

THAT'S *BOB!* I'LL LET HIM *IN!*

TELL HIM I'LL BE DOWN *SHORTLY!*

JOAN GOES DOWNSTAIRS! YOU TIPTOE TO THE HEAD OF THE STAIRS TO SPY ON HER...

HI, JOAN! ER... WHERE'S *HELEN?*

UPSTAIRS... *DRESSING*, BOB! COME INTO THE LIVING ROOM! I WANT TO *TELL* YOU SOMETHING!

YOU DUCK AS THEY BOTH GLANCE UPSTAIRS SHEEPISHLY AND GO INTO THE LIVING ROOM! YOU SLIP DOWNSTAIRS... STRAINING YOUR EARS...

WHAT'S UP, JOAN?

HELEN *SUSPECTS* SOMETHING, BOB! I THINK YOU OUGHT TO *TELL* HER... *SOON!* YOU CAN'T PUT IT OFF ANY *LONGER!* SHE'LL *FIND OUT*...

THEY'RE IN THERE... THE TWO OF THEM! YOU WANT TO SCREAM! YOUR SISTER... AND BOB...

OKAY! MEET ME FOR *LUNCH* TOMORROW AT THE *CANDLE-LIGHT CAFE!* WE'LL DO IT... *TOMORROW!* I'VE GOT TO GO OUT OF *TOWN* TOMORROW NIGHT...

FINE! OH I'M *SO GLAD*... I CAN *HARDLY WAIT!*

AND *YOU* CAN HARDLY *CONTROL* YOURSELF, HELEN? SO WHAT YOU'VE *SUSPECTED* IS *TRUE!* YOU MAKE UP YOUR MIND! *TOMORROW*...YOU'LL *FOLLOW* THEM... AND *CATCH THEM* IN THE *ACT* OF *BETRAYAL!* SO YOU PUT ON A PLEASANT FACE... AND...

BOB! I'M *SORRY* I KEPT YOU *WAITING!*

HELEN! YOU LOOK *LOVELY!* IT WAS *WORTH* IT!

THE NEXT DAY... YOU WATCH JOAN DRESS...

GOING OUT, DEAR?

GOT A LUNCHEON DATE WITH AN OLD SCHOOL CHUM, HELEN!

THE LIAR! *THE DIRTY ROTTEN LIAR!* YOU LET HER GO, AND THEN FOLLOW HER! YOU WATCH THEM MEET... BOB AND JOAN...

C'MON! WE'LL GRAB A BITE AND THEN PICK OUT THE *RING!*

NO! LET'S PICK OUT THE RING *FIRST!*

YOU WATCH THEM GO INTO THE JEWELRY SHOP NEARBY...

...WATCH THE JEWELRY SHOP OWNER DISPLAY A TRAY OF RINGS FOR THEM...

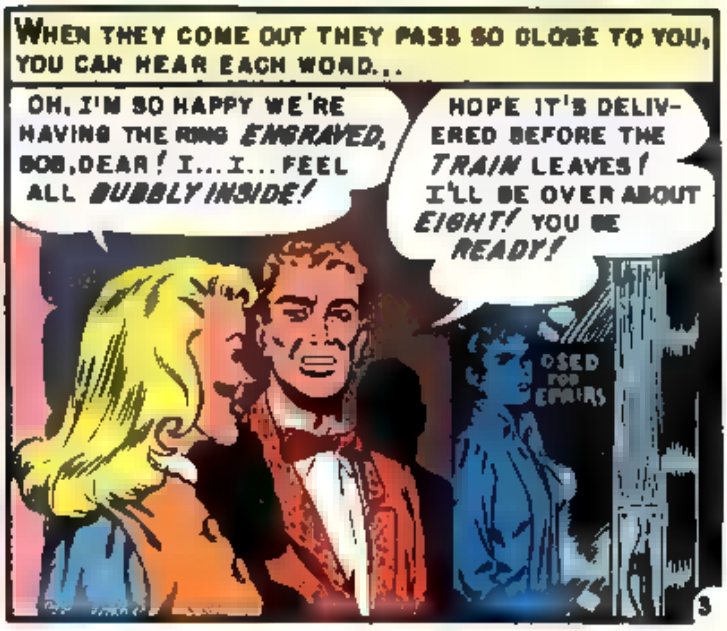
...WATCH JOAN PICK ONE OUT... SLIP IT ON HER FINGER...AND ADMIRE IT...

... AND THE TEARS FILL YOUR EYES AS BOB PAYS FOR IT! THEN JOAN POINTS TO THE INSIDE OF THE RING... AND BOB SMILES AND NODS! THEY'RE GOING TO HAVE THE RING *ENGRAVED*...

WHEN THEY COME OUT THEY PASS SO CLOSE TO YOU, YOU CAN HEAR EACH WORD...

OH, I'M SO HAPPY WE'RE HAVING THE RING *ENGRAVED,* BOB, DEAR! I... I... FEEL ALL *BUBBLY INSIDE!*

HOPE IT'S DELIVERED BEFORE THE *TRAIN* LEAVES! I'LL BE OVER ABOUT *EIGHT!* YOU BE *READY!*



YOU DON'T GO *HOME* THAT AFTERNOON, HELEN FORBES! YOU WALK THE STREETS! JOAN HAS WON! SHE'S STOLEN BOB FROM UNDER YOUR NOSE! THE ONE MAN YOU EVER WANTED! HATE PULSATES THROUGH YOUR VEINS! YOU MAKE UP YOUR MIND...

IF... IF *I* CAN'T HAVE HIM... *NO ONE WILL!* I'LL I'LL *KILL* HIM... KILL THEM *BOTH!*

YOU BUY THE GUN! YOU SPEND YOUR LAST DOLLAR ON IT! BUYING GUNS WITHOUT A LICENSE COSTS A GREAT DEAL! A LITTLE AFTER EIGHT O'CLOCK, YOU GO HOME...

HELEN! WE WERE *WORRIED* ABOUT YOU!

WERE YOU? I *DOUBT* IT!

HELEN! WHY SO *ANGRY?*

ANGRY? DO I *SOUND* ANGRY? *SHOULDN'T* I BE? SHOULD I *SMILE* WHEN MY SISTER *STEALS* THE MAN I LOVE? I *SAW* YOU *TOGETHER* TODAY... BUYING THE *RING!*

HELEN! YOU'RE ALL *WRONG!* BOB AND I...

HELEN!

YOU PULL OUT THE GUN! YOU POINT IT AT THEM AND SQUEEZE THE TRIGGER AGAIN AND AGAIN...

HELEN! I... UNNNGH...

EEEE... GGGH!

YOU STAND OVER THEM, THE TEARS STREAMING DOWN YOUR FACE...

YOU... CHOKE... FOOL... COUGH! SHE... WAS JUST... *HELPING... ME... GASP...*

THE DOORBELL RINGS! YOU STARE DOWN AT THEIR LIFELESS BODIES! THE DOORBELL RINGS AGAIN... INSISTANTLY! YOU GO TO ANSWER IT...

PACKAGE FOR MISS FORBES! MARTINSON'S JEWELRY...

I'LL TAKE IT!

YOU CLOSE THE DOOR AND UNWRAP THE TINY PACKAGE! THE RING IS INSIDE THE VELVET-COVERED BOX! YOU HOLD IT UP... SQUINTING AT THE ENGRAVING INSIDE! THE CURLED, ETCHED LETTERS SHRIEK AT YOU...

'TO *HELEN*, WITH ALL OF MY DEVOTION! BOB!' GASP! IT... IT WAS FOR *ME!* HE... HE BOUGHT IT FOR *ME!* JOAN WAS *HELPING* HIM *PICK IT OUT!* BOB... BOB...

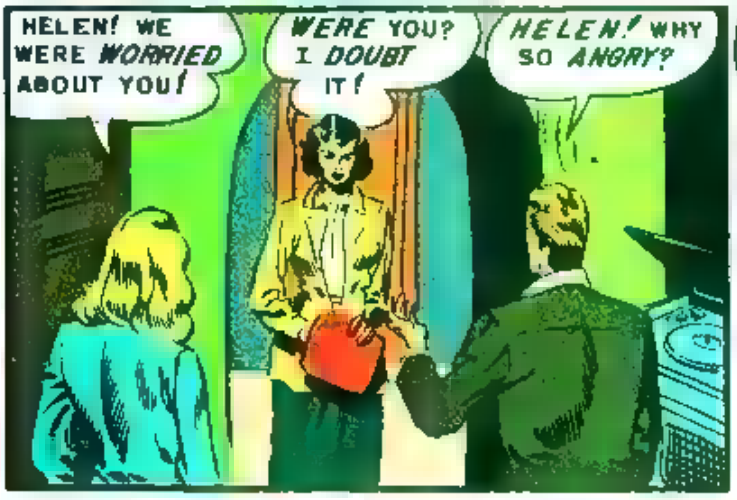
THE END

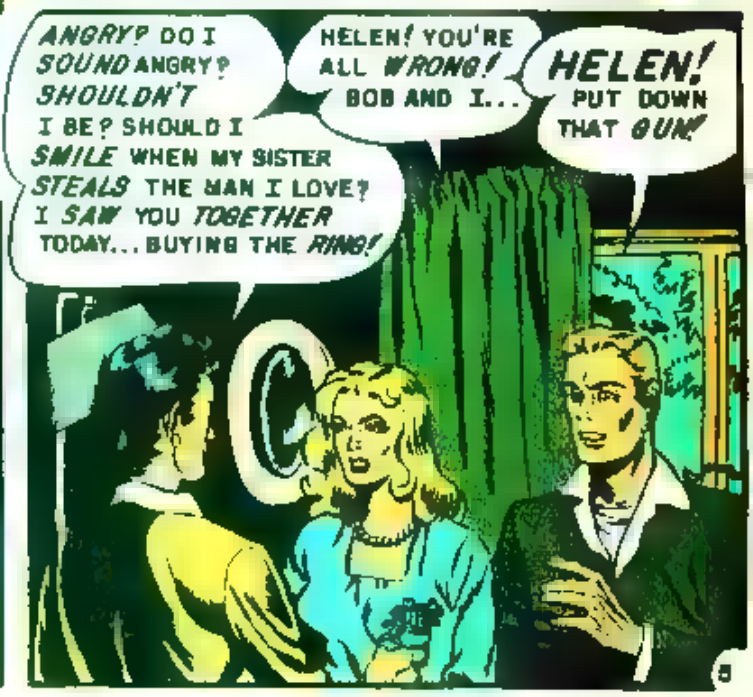
NOW YOU'RE *SORRY*, AREN'T YOU? HOW WOULD YOU LIKE A...

SECOND CHANCE?

SID CHECK

O.K.! FOR THIS SECOND 'E.C. QUICKIE,' LET'S GO BACK A BIT AND *GIVE* YOU THAT *SECOND CHANCE!* LET'S PRESUME THAT YOU'RE NOT GOING TO BE SO *HOT-HEADED!* WE'LL PICK UP THE STORY WHEN YOU GET HOME THAT NIGHT... A LITTLE AFTER EIGHT! THE GUN ■ HEAVY IN YOUR POCKETBOOK...





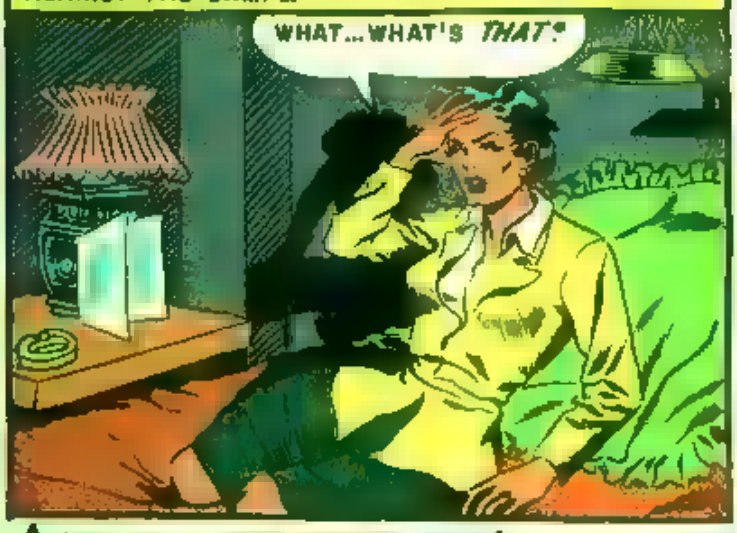
THIS TIME YOU RAISE THE GUN, BUT YOU DON'T FIRE! THIS IS YOUR SECOND CHANCE, HELEN! LISTEN TO THEM! THEY'RE GOING TO STOP YOU FROM DOING SOMETHING YOU'LL REGRET...
HELEN! FOR HEAVEN'S SAKE...
I'M NOT GOING TO LET YOU HAVE HIM, JOAN!
WAIT! LET ME EXPLAIN, HELEN!
HOW CAN YOU EXPLAIN ANYTHING, BOB? I HAVE EYES! I SAW YOU BUY THE RING!
BUT I BOUGHT THE RING FOR YOU, HELEN! JOAN JUST HELPED ME PICK IT OUT!
I... I WAS SO HAPPY FOR YOU, HELEN DEAR!
I WANTED TO GIVE IT TO YOU BEFORE I LEFT ON MY ROAD TRIP!
YOU... YOU BOUGHT IT FOR ME?
OF COURSE, DARLING!
AND I THOUGHT... BOB! I... I WANTED TO KILL YOU! BOTH OF YOU!
PUT AWAY THE GUN, HELEN! WE WON'T TALK ABOUT IT!
THE DOORBELL RINGS! YOU GO TO ANSWER IT...
PACKAGE FOR MISS FORBES! MARTINSON'S JEWELRY...
I'LL TAKE IT!
YOU HAND THE PACKAGE TO BOB AND HE UNWRAPS IT! HE TAKES THE GLITTERING RING FROM THE VELVET-COVERED BOX AND SLIPS IT ON YOUR TREMBLING FINGER...
WITH ALL MY LOVE, HELEN, DARLING!
OH, BOB! HOW CAN YOU EVER FORGIVE ME?
BOB! YOU'D BETTER HURRY! YOU'LL MISS YOUR TRAIN!
S-SURE! GOOD-BYE, HELEN! JUST AS SOON AS I GET BACK, WE'LL MAKE THOSE WEDDING PLANS!
YES... BOB... SOB... YES, BOB!
I'LL DRIVE YOU TO THE STATION, FUTURE BROTHER-IN-LAW!

BOB TAKES YOU IN HIS ARMS...

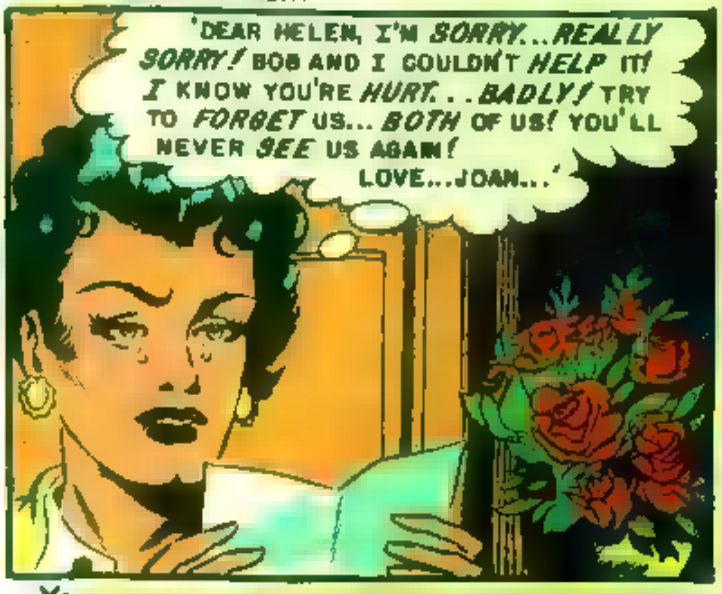
...AND THEN HE IS GONE! JOAN SMILES AT YOU...

YOU LISTEN TO THE CAR ROAR OFF INTO THE NIGHT! YOU LIFT YOUR HAND AND STUDY THE SHIMMERING ENGAGEMENT RING...

YOU GO UPSTAIRS AND FLING YOURSELF ON THE BED! AFTER A WHILE YOU LOOK AROUND! A WHITE SHEET OF PAPER IS PROPPED UP ON THE NIGHT-TABLE AGAINST THE LAMP...



YOU PICK IT UP WITH TREMBLING FINGERS! IT'S IN JOAN'S HANDWRITING...



A COLD CHILL RUNS UP YOUR SPINE! YOU LOOK AROUND WILDLY! JOAN'S *CLOSET*...

YOU TEAR THE GLITTERING RING FROM YOUR FINGER AND HOLD IT UP...SQUINTING AT THE ENGRAVING INSIDE! THE CURLED, ETCHED LETTERS SHRIEK AT YOU...

FREAK!

Slipping his left hand into the big boxing glove, Kayo Egan carefully tied the long laces with his free hand. Without expression he watched his manager knot the laces of the other glove. When the operation was completed, the burly fighter sneered:

"I don't care how much time and money you invested in me, Moose! Starting tonight, I'm cutting you OUT!"

Moose's awkward lunge had been anticipated: in the heavy leather glove encasing his right hand Kayo gripped the handle of a galvanized iron water pail. Before the older man could dodge, Kayo smashed the pail hard against his forehead. The smaller man toppled to the floor instantly, a pool of blood darkening the concrete floor under him. *Best way out,* Kayo thought. *Mebbe Moose DID help me up till now. But the big dough's just beginning to come in with tonight's fight. And big dough Kayo Egan don't share with ANYONE!*

A quick glance showed the fighter that the dimly-lit corridor was empty. Hooking his gloved hands under the dead manager's arms, Kayo dragged his victim slowly out of the shabby dressing room. Dropping the pail beside the body, Kayo made certain that no one had seen him before he slipped back into his room. *The usher who comes to call me into the ring'll discover that body in about 5 minutes,* Kayo thought smugly. *And my alibi's ready. Like Moose usta say, before his accident . . . it always pays to be prepared!*

The moments ticked by; then, finally, there was a short rap and the door opened. An usher, his face white with fear, led 2 uniformed stadium guards into the room. The younger of the Police gulped once before he spoke:

"We just found your manager out in the hallway, Mr. Egan. His head's been caved-in with a water pail . . ."

"M-Moose . . . D-DEAD?" Kayo was elated to hear his voice break on the second word. "H-He musta been jumped before he got here! For the past half-hour I been sitting here and sweating him out . . ."

The older Policeman walked slowly across the room until he was an arm's-length from the prize-fighter. "You've been alone here all evening, waiting for your manager to arrive and prepare you for your fight?" he asked sympathetically.

Kayo felt instinctively that he was on safe ground. These two dumb cops were actually sorry for him in what they imagined was his bereavement!

"T-That's . . . right," Kayo managed to mutter between agonized sobs. "I been sitting here all by my lonesome, waiting for poor old Moose to show up! W-Who would wanta harm a guy like Moose . . . ?"

The older cop's movement was so fast that it caught Kayo completely by surprise. Before the fighter could move he felt the manacles clicking shut around his wrists.

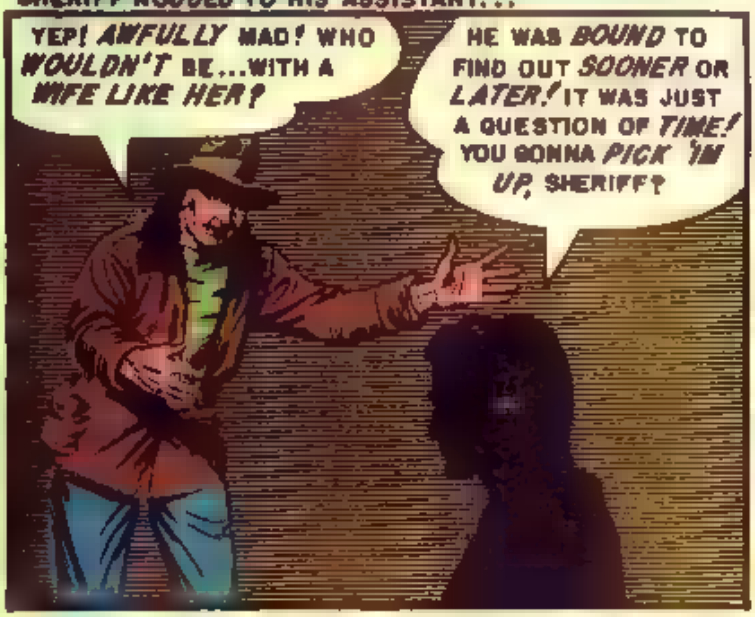
"If you've been all alone in this dressing room tonight," the older cop was saying, "would you mind letting me in on the secret of how you managed to lace up BOTH your boxing gloves? One glove, I can understand . . . anyone can do *that*. But with a bulky leather glove already on one hand . . . it would take an octopus to adjust that second glove! Or a three-armed man!"

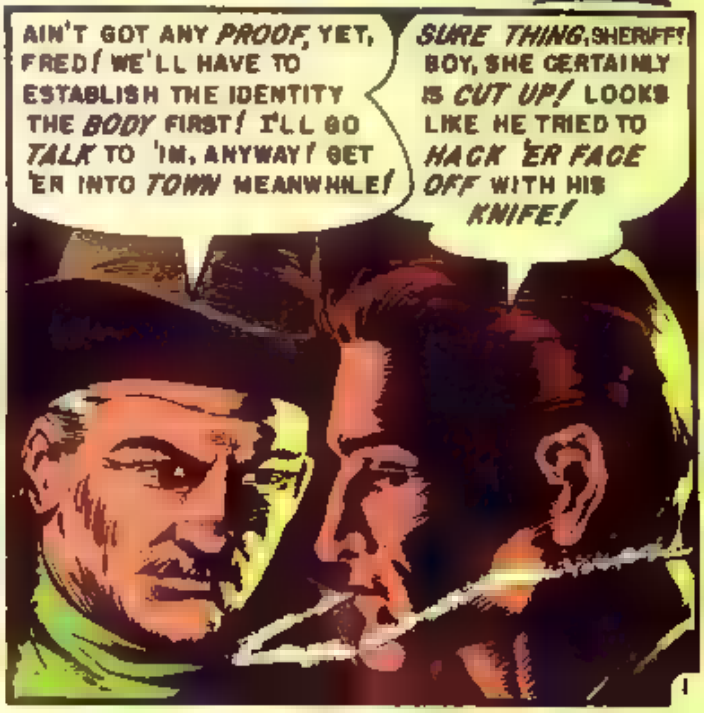
A QUESTION OF TIME!!

IT'S *HER*, ALL RIGHT! EVERYBODY *SAID* HE'D *KILL* HER SOMEDAY... WHEN HE *FOUND OUT!*

LORD! HER *FACE'S* BEEN *BATTERED* TO A *PULP!* CAN'T EVEN MAKE OUT HER *FEATURES!* HE MUSTA BEEN *AWFULLY MAD!*

THEY STOOD ABOUT IN THE QUIET TOURIST CABIN, LOOKING DOWN AT THE MUTILATED BODY OF THE WOMAN! THE SHERIFF NODDED TO HIS ASSISTANT...





THE SHERIFF SAUNTERED OUT TO HIS CAR AS HIS ASSISTANT SIGNALED THE MORGUE-WAGON ATTENDENTS...

OKAY, YOU GUYS! LET'S CLEAN UP THE JOINT!

SEE YOU AT THE OFFICE, FRED!

FIVE MINUTES LATER, THE SHERIFF PULLED UP BEFORE HARRY WISMER'S HOUSE! HARRY SAT OUT FRONT... UNDER A TREE... WHITTLING...

HOWDY, SHERIFF! NICE DAY, EH?

HOWDY, HARRY! YEP! SURE IS! WHERE'S LILA, HARRY?

OH, THE WIFE'S AWAY VISITIN', SHERIFF!

MIGHT AS WELL COME CLEAN, HARRY! WE FOUND HER BODY!

HER BODY? LILA'S? SHE'S DEAD?

MURDERED! NOW, TAKE IT EASY, HARRY! WE ALL KNOW WHY YOU DONE IT! WE KNOW'D IT LONG BEFORE YOU DID! AN' I FOR ONE DON'T BLAME YOU... NOT ONE BIT! SHE WAS NO GOOD! T'AIN'T NO USE PLAY-ACTIN'!

YOU... YOU SAY YOU KNEW? YOU ALL KNEW...

SURE! THE WHOLE TOWN KNEW! YOU WAS THE ONLY ONE THAT DIDN'T KNOW ABOUT LILA!

EVERYONE ELSE... KNEW IT?

EVERYONE! SHUCKS! MANY'S THE TIME I WANTED TO TELL YOU! BUT I JUS' COULDN'T! COULDN'T BRING MYSELF TO DO IT! I FIGURED... HARRY... HE'LL FIND OUT BY HIMSELF! COME ON, HARRY! LET'S GO!

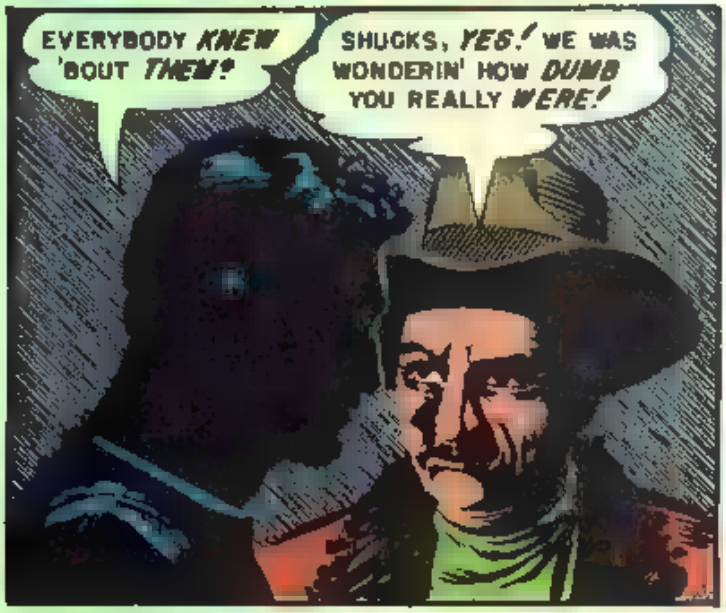
GO WHERE, SHERIFF?

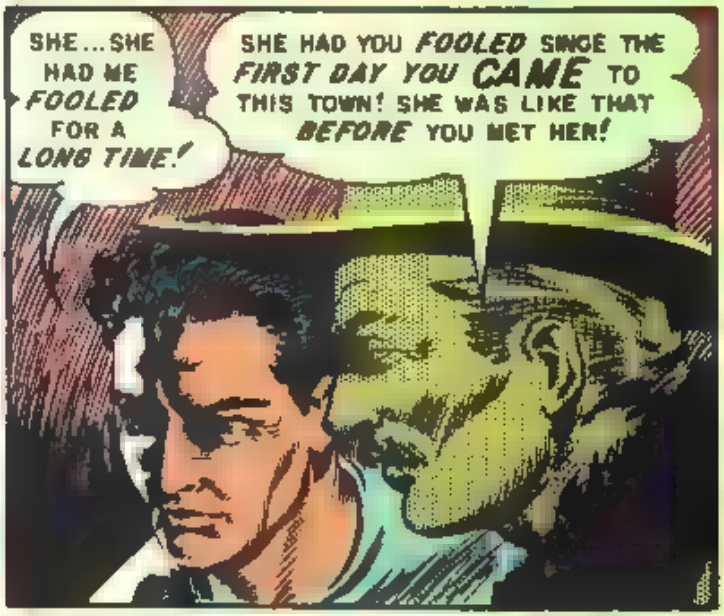
WHY, DOWNTOWN! YOU WANT TO CONFESS, DON'T YOU? IT'LL MAKE IT EASIER ON YOU IF'N YOU DO!

I'M NOT CONFESSIN' NUTHIN', SHERIFF! YOU'LL HAVE TO ARREST ME!
OKAY, HARRY! IF THAT'S THE WAY YOU WANT IT!

THAT'S THE WAY I WANT IT, SHERIFF!
YOU'RE MAKIN' A BIG MISTAKE, HARRY! EVERYBODY IN TOWN UNDERSTANDS! A JURY MIGHT ASK FOR LENIENCY UNDER THE CIRCUMSTANCES...

CIRCUMSTANCES? WHAT DO YUH MEAN?
YOU FINDIN' OUT ABOUT LILA... ABOUT HER SO CALLED VISITIN' TRIPS!


EVERYBODY KNEW 'BOUT THEM?
SHUCKS, YES! WE WAS WONDERIN' HOW DUMB YOU REALLY WERE!


SHE... SHE HAD ME FOOLED FOR A LONG TIME!
SHE HAD YOU FOOLED SINCE THE FIRST DAY YOU CAME TO THIS TOWN! SHE WAS LIKE THAT BEFORE YOU MET HER!

BEFORE? AN' NOBODY TOLD ME?
NOBODY THOUGHT YOU'D BE FOOL ENOUGH TO FALL FOR HER, HARRY! THEN, WHEN YOU AND LILA BECAME ENGAGED... WE WAS AFRAID TO TELL YOU!

WHY? WHY? WHY WERE YOU AFRAID?
WELL, NO GUY LIKES TO FIND OUT THAT THE DAME HE'S IN LOVE WITH HAS BEEN WITH EVERY GUY IN TOWN!

N-NO! I GUESS NOT!
SO WE ALL KEPT OUR MOUTHS SHUT! WE HOPED YOU'D FIND OUT ALL BY YOURSELF!

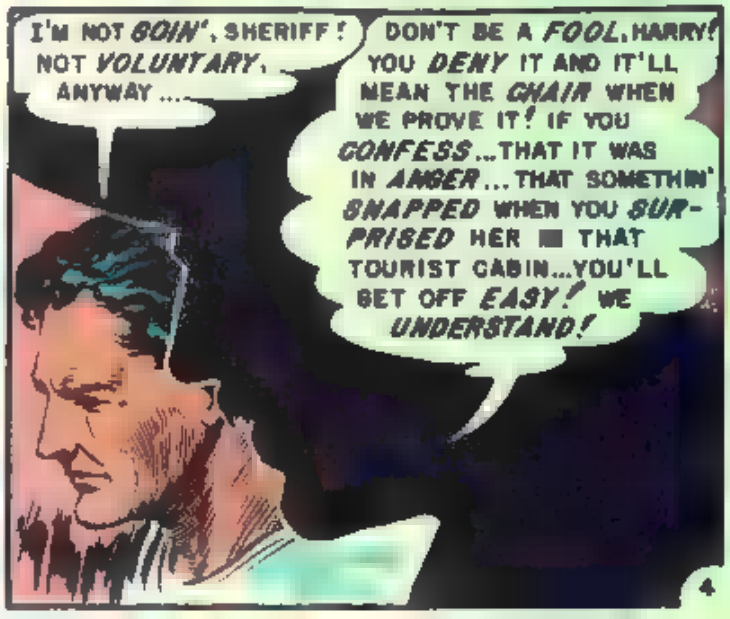
AND YOU LET ME *MARRY* HER!
SHUCKS! WE FIGURED MAYBE SHE'D *CHANGED!* MAYBE SHE'D BE *ALL RIGHT* WITH *YOU!*

I WAS PRETTY *BLIND!*
I'LL SAY! THEN, WHEN SHE BEGAN GOIN' AWAY... *VISITIN'*... WE *ALL* KNEW WHAT WAS UP!

SHE WAS *STARTIN' ALL OVER* AGAIN!
GUYS IN *TOWN KEPT AWAY*... BUT *SHE'D* MEET THE *TRANSIENTS!*

KEPT IT UP FOR OVER A *YEAR* BEFORE I FOUND OUT!
CAN'T SEE HOW YOU *TOOK* SO LONG!

THINK I'LL GET OFF *LIGHT?*
SURE! C'MON!


I'M NOT *GOIN'*, SHERIFF! NOT *VOLUNTARY*, ANYWAY...
DON'T BE A *FOOL*, HARRY! YOU *DENY* IT AND IT'LL MEAN THE *CHAIR* WHEN WE PROVE IT! IF YOU *CONFESS*...THAT IT WAS IN *ANGER*...THAT SOMETHIN' *SNAPPED* WHEN YOU *SURPRISED* HER IN THAT TOURIST CABIN...YOU'LL GET OFF *EASY!* WE *UNDERSTAND!*

THE SHERIFF SPED AWAY TOWARD TOWN! HARRY STOOD QUIETLY STARING AFTER HIM! THEN HE SAT BACK AND STARTED WHITTLING AGAIN...

IT WAS DARK WHEN THE FOOTSTEPS REBOUNDED UP THE DESERTED STREET! HARRY LOOKED UP... SQUINTING INTO THE DARKNESS! THE FIGURE APPROACHED...

IT WAS A WOMAN! SHE CARRIED A SMALL SUITCASE IN ONE HAND! HARRY STOOD UP...

THEY STARTED UP THE PORCH AND INTO THE HOUSE...
HAD A VISITOR MYSELF TODAY, LILA!
OH! WHO?

HARRY CLOSED THE DOOR...
THE SHERIFF!
THE SHERIFF! WHAT'D HE WANT?

THEY FOUND SOME DAME IN A TOURIST CABIN...DEAD! MURDERED! THEY THINK IT'S YOU!
ME!?

THEY THINK I DID IT! THEY THINK I MURDERED YOU!
WHAT...WHAT MADE THEM THINK THAT?

DON'T YOU KNOW, LILA?
HARRY! PUT DOWN THAT WHITTLIN' KNIFE!

EVERYBODY KNEW ABOUT YOU, LILA! EVERYBODY BUT ME! I TRUSTED YOU! NOW I AM GOING TO KILL YOU! YOU DESERVE IT... YOU DIRTY...
HARRY! FOR GOD'S SAKE!
EEEEEEEE!

THEY STOOD ABOUT IN THE LIVING ROOM OF HARRY'S HOME, LOOKING DOWN AT THE MUTILATED BODY OF HIS WIFE...
HE...HE WAS BOUND TO FIND OUT SOONER OR LATER! IT WAS JUST A QUESTION OF TIME!
YEAH! JUST A QUESTION OF... TIME...

THE HAUNT OF FEAR

HEE, HEE! *HATCHET-DO? HATCHET-DO?* ALLOW ME TO *AXE* YOU TO *COME IN*... COME INTO THE *HAUNT OF FEAR!* YES, THIS IS YOUR *CREEPS CONCOCTER*, YOUR *WAITRESS IN WAILS, THE OLD WITCH*... READY TO *SERVE OUT* ANOTHER *SLIME SAMPLING* FROM THE *SLOP* IN MY *CAULDRON!* SO SIT DOWN, AND I'LL *FEED* YOU THE *FEARFUL-FOUL-FARE* I CALL...

FORTY WHACKS!

FANNY WESTON STARED INTO THE MIRROR PAST HER IMAGE! HER FATHER STOOD BEHIND HER, GLARING...

MR. WESTON CAUGHT HIS FRIGHTENED DAUGHTER'S ARM AND SPUN HER AROUND...

WIPE THAT *STUFF* OFF YOUR MOUTH *THIS INSTANT! IT'S DISGRACEFUL!*

BUT, *DADDY!* I'M *OLD ENOUGH!* I'M *TWENTY-TWO!*

FANNY'S MOTHER CAME INTO THE BEDROOM...

YOU'LL *NOT* GO *PARADING* THROUGH THE *STREETS* LOOKING LIKE A *PAINTED TRAMP!*

SOB... *MOTHER! WHY* CAN'T I WEAR *MAKE UP?* *ALL* THE GIRLS DO!

YOU'RE FATHER IS *RIGHT,* FANNY! TAKE...

I HATE YOU...BOTH OF YOU! YOU DON'T LET ME WEAR *MAKE-UP!* YOU PICK MY *CLOTHES* FOR ME! YOU WON'T LET ME GO OUT WITH *BOYS!* WHAT ARE YOU TRYING TO *DO* TO ME... *MAKE ME INTO A SHRIVELED OLD MAID?*

FANNY! YOU'D BETTER *APOLOGIZE,* YOUNG LADY!

FANNY DARTED FROM HER ROOM, SOBBING...

NO! I'LL *NOT* APOLOGIZE! *I'LL NOT!* I *MEANT* IT! I *HATE* YOU! *HATE YOU!*

FANNY! COME *BACK* HERE!

LET HER *GO*, SID! SHE'LL GET *OVER* IT! OH... THIS YOUNGER GENERATION...

FANNY SCURRIED DOWN THE HALL...HER EYES FILLING WITH TEARS! SHE FLUNG OPEN THE DOOR THAT LED TO THE ATTIC, AND DARTED UP THE DUSTY STAIRS! THE ATTIC... FANNY'S HAVEN! WHENEVER SHE WANTED TO BE ALONE, FANNY WOULD GO TO THE ATTIC...

SOB... SOB...

IT WAS THERE IN THAT DUSTY ATTIC THAT FANNY WOULD ESCAPE FROM THE DRABNESS OF HER SHELTERED LIFE! THERE, AMONG THE OLD RELICS, MOTH-EATEN CLOTHES, AND ANCIENT FURNITURE, FANNY'D FIND ROMANCE AND ADVENTURE! FROM THE TINY WINDOW, SHE COULD LOOK OUT OVER THE SMALL MASSACHUSETTS TOWN WHERE SHE LIVED! SHE COULD THUMB THROUGH OLD BOOKS... DREAM...

WH...WHAT'S *THAT?*

A THIN STREAM OF SUNLIGHT KNIFED INTO THE DARKNESS, ILLUMINATING IT! FANNY'D NEVER SEEN *THAT* OBJECT BEFORE! SHE'D NEVER NOTICED IT WEDGED BEHIND THE ATTIC BEAM...

IT...IT'S A HATCHET! A *RUSTY, DIRTY OLD HATCHET!*

FANNY PUSHED AN OLD MOTH-EATEN CHAIR UNDER THE ATTIC BEAM AND REACHED FOR THE DUST-LADEN HATCHET...

ALL THESE YEARS IT'S BEEN WEDGED UP THERE, AND I NEVER KNEW IT!

SHE PULLED IT FROM ITS HIDING PLACE AND BROUGHT IT TO THE TINY ATTIC WINDOW TO EXAMINE IT...

MY! IT...IT'S STILL RATHER SHARP! I...I...

THE HATCHET WAS WARM IN FANNY'S HANDS! SHE FELT SUDDENLY ELATED ...GAY! SHE STARED AT THE LETHAL WEAPON...GRINNING...

HIDDEN UP THERE... ALL THESE YEARS! JUST LIKE ME! OUT OF CIRCULATION! USELESS! AGING! RUSTING! AND NOW... NOW YOU'RE FREE!

THE STRANGE SENSATION THAT SWEPT OVER FANNY SEEMED TO BE EMINATING FROM THE HATCHET! FANNY GIGGLED AS SHE TIP-TOED DOWN THE ATTIC STAIRS...

I'VE FREED YOU... MY LITTLE FRIEND, EH, EH! NOW... YOU'LL... FREE ME!

MRS. WESTON TURNED AT THE NOISE BEHIND HER! WHAT SHE SAW MADE HER EYES BULGE IN THEIR SOCKETS...

FANNY! GOOD LORD! PUT DOWN THAT...

MR. WESTON HEARD HIS WIFE'S SHORT YELP DIE IN A GOUGHING GURGLE! HE RUSHED UPSTAIRS AND FLUNG OPEN THE DOOR! FANNY STOOD BEHIND IT...WAITING...

RUTH? DID YOU...? RUTH! YAAAAAAAAA!

MR. WESTON FELT A SUDDEN WAVE OF NAUSEA SWEEP OVER HIM AS HE STARED DOWN AT WHAT WAS LEFT OF THE FACE OF HIS SPOUSE! FANNY MOVED TOWARD HIM! HE GLANCED UP IN TIME TO SEE THE HATCHET SWINGING DOWN AT HIM...

FANNY! FANNY! DON'T...

DETECTIVE ERNIE VANCE STROKED HIS CHIN AS HE STUDIED THE MUTILATED BODIES BEFORE HIM! HE SHOOK HIS HEAD AND SHRUGGED! FANNY SAT ON THE BED SOBBING! DETECTIVE VANCE MOVED TOWARD HER...

WHAT MADE YOU *DO* IT, FANNY? WHAT MADE YOU *DO* A THING LIKE *THIS*?

I...I *DON'T KNOW!* I...I *FOUND* THE AXE... AND THEN...

DID YOU *HATE* THEM, FANNY? WERE THEY *CRUEL* TO YOU?

NO! NO! SOB...SOB! I...I COULDN'T *HELP* IT! THEY WERE *STRICT*... BUT I DIDN'T HATE THEM ENOUGH TO *KILL* THEM! IT...IT WAS THE *AXE!* WHEN I *FOUND* IT, SOMETHING *HAPPENED* TO ME! I...SOB...I COULDN'T *STOP* MYSELF!

DETECTIVE VANCE PICKED UP THE AXE AND STUDIED IT...

ALL RIGHT, DOUGHERTY! TAKE HER DOWN AND *BOOK* HER!

IT WAS THE *AXE*, I TELL YOU! *I* DIDN'T *DO* IT! *THE AXE DID!*

C'MON, YOUNG LADY!

IT WAS THE *AXE!* THE *AXE KILLED THEM!* THE... SOB...SOB... *AXE*...

CRAZY DAME! GET HER *OUT* OF HERE, DOUGHERTY!

LATER THAT DAY, THE DOOR TO DETECTIVE VANCE'S OFFICE BURST OPEN AND A SMALL BOY ENTERED, FOLLOWED BY A YOUNG WOMAN...

DADDY! DADDY!

JUNIOR! EDITH! WHAT ARE *YOU* DOING HERE?

I *HEARD* ABOUT *FANNY WESTON*, ERNIE!

LOOK, EDITH! THIS IS *NO PLACE* FOR THE *KID!* TAKE HIM *HOME!*

IS THAT THE *AXE* SHE USED, ERNIE?

YEAH! NOW HOW ABOUT YOU TWO SCRAMING! I'LL BE HOME SOON AS I MAKE OUT MY REPORT!

I HEARD WHAT MISS WESTON *SAID*, ERNIE... ABOUT THE *AXE!* I... HAVE A *THEORY!*

OH, NO, EDITH! LOOK! GO BACK TO YOUR MYSTERY BOOKS! I'LL HANDLE THE DETECTIVE WORK!
ERNIE! DID YOU EVER HEAR OF LIZZIE BORDEN?
LIZZIE BORDEN? SURE! SHE WAS TRIED FOR MURDERING HER FATHER AND STEP-MOTHER WITH AN AXE... BACK IN 1893... OVER IN FALL RIVER!
CORRECT! I JUST READ UP ON IT BEFORE I CAME! IT SEEMS...
'...IT SEEMS THAT ANDREW BORDEN, LIZZIE'S FATHER, REMARRIED SOON AFTER HIS FIRST WIFE'S DEATH! HE HAD TWO DAUGHTERS... LIZZIE... AND EMMA...'
THIS IS YOUR NEW MOTHER, GIRLS! ABBIE! MEET LIZZIE... AND EMMA...
GLAD TO MEET YOU, GIRLS! I HOPE WE GET ALONG!
'LIZZIE AND HER SISTER EMMA WERE BOTH VERY PRIM AND PROPER YOUNG LADIES! BUT WHEN ANDREW BORDEN BROUGHT ABBIE, HIS NEW BRIDE, INTO HIS HOUSE... THE GIRLS CHANGED...'
AREN'T YOU HUNGRY, GIRLS? COME AND EAT!
WE'LL EAT BY OURSELVES, THANK YOU, MA'AM!
'IT WAS SAID THAT LIZZIE AND EMMA HATED THEIR NEW MOTHER BECAUSE THEY FEARED LOSING THEIR INHERITANCE TO HER! ANDREW BORDEN WAS QUITE RICH! ONE DAY...'
YES, MISS BORDEN! WHAT CAN I DO FOR YOU?
I'D LIKE TO BUY SOME PRUSSIC ACID! WE... ER... WE HAVE RATS!
'IT SEEMS THAT THE WEEK BEFORE THE MURDER, ABBIE AND ANDREW BEAME VIOLENTLY SICK! IT WAS SUSPECTED THAT THEY'D BEEN POISONED! THEN, ON THE FATEFUL DAY, LIZZIE ORDERED THE FAMILY SERVANT FROM THE HOUSE...'
BUT, I HAVE WORK, MA'AM!
GO HANG UP THE WASH, MAGGIE!
EMMA HAD GONE ON A VISIT THAT DAY! LIZZIE'S STEP-MOTHER WAS ATTACKED FROM BEHIND WHILE MAKING A BED...

'ANDREW BORDEN WAS MURDERED WHILE HE SLEPT ON A SOFA...'

'LIZZIE CLAIMED SHE WAS OUTSIDE THE HOUSE LOOKING FOR SOME FISH LINE AT THE TIME! IN THE CELLAR OF THE BORDEN HOUSE, THEY FOUND A *HATCHET* BELONGING TO THE MURDERED MAN! IT HAD BEEN SCRUBBED CLEAN AND RUBBED IN ASHES...'

LOOK!

IT'S THE *MURDER WEAPON*, ALL RIGHT!

'EVERYONE IN FALL RIVER WAS SHOCKED BY THE GORY MURDERS! NO ONE WOULD BELIEVE THAT SUCH A SWEET PRIM GIRL AS LIZZIE COULD DO SUCH A HORRENDOUS DEED...'

YOU *ALL KNOW HER*, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN OF THE JURY! I *ASK* YOU! COULD SUCH A *SWEET CHILD* COMMIT SUCH A *DASTARDLY ACT?*

'MANY WITNESSES WERE NOT EVEN ALLOWED TO TESTIFY! THE DRUGGIST WHO SOLD HER THE PRUSSIC ACID... A WOMAN WHO SAW HER BURNING A DRESS...'

DUE TO *INSUFFICIENT EVIDENCE*, WE FIND THE DEFENDENT... *NOT GUILTY!*

'SISTER EMMA STOOD BY LIZZIE UNTIL AFTER THE TRIAL....THEN TOOK HER SHARE OF THE INHERITANCE AND MOVED AWAY FROM FALL RIVER...'

GOOD-BYE, EMMA! ARE YOU *SURE* YOU WANT TO *DO* THIS?

POSITIVE, LIZZIE! GOOD-BYE!

FALL RIVER

OKAY! OKAY! SO WHAT'S *THIS* GOT TO DO WITH FANNY WESTON?

EMMA BORDEN *MOVED* FROM FALL RIVER, ERNIE! DO YOU KNOW *WHERE SHE MOVED TO?*

HUH? WHY... WHY...

SHE MOVED *HERE!* TO *THIS TOWN!* SHE LIVED IN THE *VERY HOUSE* THE *WESTON'S LIVED IN!*

WHAT? ARE YOU TRYING TO TELL ME THAT THAT AXE...
...IS THE ONE LIZZIE BORDEN MURDERED HER MOTHER AND FATHER WITH!
LIZZIE BORDEN TOOK AN AXE, AND GAVE HER MOTHER FORTY WHACKS! WHEN SHE SAW...
SHUT UP, JUNIOR! YOUR MOTHER'S MAKING ENOUGH NOISE!
THERE'S SOMETHING ABOUT THAT AXE, ERNIE! MAYBE IT'S LIKE FANNY SAYS! MAYBE IT'S CURSED...
OH, CLIMB OFF IT, EDITH!
WHEN SHE SAW WHAT SHE HAD DONE, SHE GAVE HER FATHER FORTY-ONE! GEE!
JUNIOR! SHUT UP, DO YOU... GASP... JUNIOR! PUT THAT DOWN!
LOOK, DADDY! SEE? ON THE HANDLE! LETTERS! A...N... D...R...E...W... B...O...R...D...E...N! WHAT DO THEY SPELL, DADDY?
GASP... ANDREW BORDEN...
JUNIOR! PUT DOWN THAT AXE!
THE HATCHET WAS WARM IN THE LITTLE BOY'S HANDS! HE FELT SUDDENLY ELATED...GAY! HE LIFTED IT HIGH OVER HIS HEAD...GIGGLING...AS HE DARTED AT HIS TERRORIZED PARENTS...
EH...EH...EH...
JUNIOR!
GOOD LORD!
HEE, HEE! JUNIOR TOLD THE POLICE THE SAME STORY THAT FANNY HAD WHEN THEY FOUND THE BOY STANDING OVER THE MUTILATED BODIES OF HIS DETECTIVE FATHER AND HIS IMAGINATIVE MOTHER! AS FAR AS THE BORDEN HATCHET GOES... THE KID HAD BURIED IT... HEE, HEE! YEP! THAT'S WHERE! AND NOW, THE CONTENTS OF MY CAULDRON ARE GONE... SO I'LL MIX UP ANOTHER BATCH! YOU'LL GET YOUR TASTE WHEN I SEE YOU AGAIN IN TALES FROM THE CRYPT...THE CRYPT-KEEPER'S MAG! TILL THEN... 'BYE... E.C., THAT IS!
-THE END-